The Serve America Act

On April 21, 2009, President Barack Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act (SAA), Public Law (Pub. L.) 111-13. The SAA authorizes and expands national service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation) and requires National Service Criminal History Checks for individuals who serve in positions that receive living allowances, stipends, national service educational awards, or salaries from the Corporation. Section 1612 of the SAA added Section 189D to the National and Community Service Act of 1990, by expanding the types of programs requiring the criminal history background checks. Section 1614 mandates enhanced criminal background checks for individuals in these programs who will work with vulnerable populations. Vulnerable populations include children age 17 or younger, persons age 60 and older, and individuals with disabilities.